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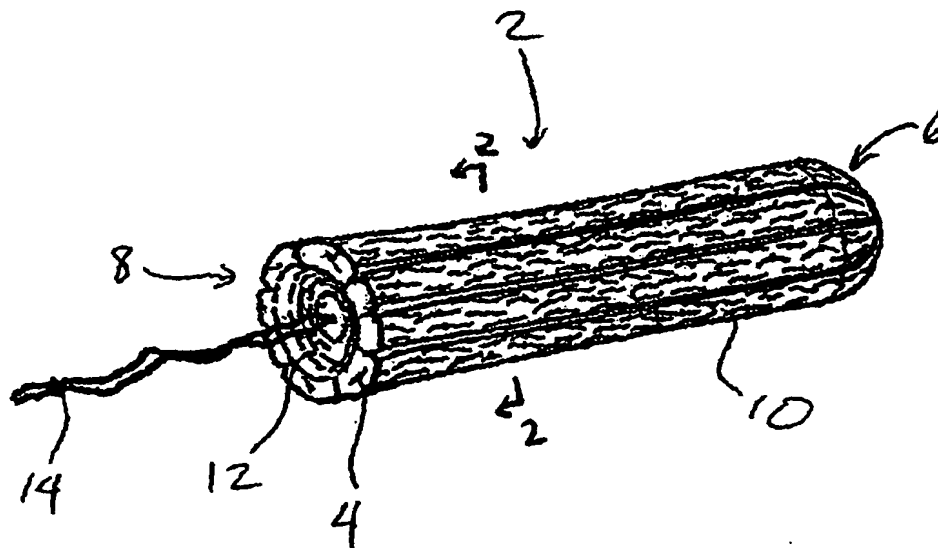
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[Continued on next page]

- (54) Title: ABSORBENT TAMPON PROVIDING CLEAN DIGITAL INSERTION**



(57) Abstract: A tampon has a generally uniform fiber distribution along its length, an insertion end, a withdrawal end, and a longitudinal axis. A finger recess having a depth of at least about 5 mm is formed into the withdrawal end. Nonetheless, a column strength of at least about 10 Newtons (N) can still be achieved. The tampon can be formed by winding an absorbent fibrous web around a winding mandrel; transferring the blank into a press; inserting a forming mandrel into one end of a tampon blank while the tampon blank is positioned in the press; moving a plurality of press jaws toward a central longitudinal press axis to compress the tampon blank and to form a compressed tampon having a finger recess formed into the one end of the tampon; and ejecting the compressed tampon from the press.



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